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Note on the genus PLEOCOMA Lec.

BY JOHN L. LECONTE, M. D.

Some years ago I received from my excellent and liberal friend, Mr. Andrew Murray, of London, a female of this singular genus. I was unwilling at the time to describe it, as both antennæ were gone, and the specimen otherwise much mutilated. I saw a similar one in the collection of Dr. Candèze, at Liege, and recently Mr. Behrens, of San Francisco, has loaned me a more perfect individual, belonging to a different species.

The genus was founded by me * upon a mutilated specimen, which, however, retained enough of the antennæ to show that they were 11-jointed, with the 6th joint wider than preceding, the 7th still wider, and the 8—11 forming an elongate lamellate club.

Just before leaving the country, in 1857, on a long journey, I received perfect specimens of what seemed, on hasty examination, to be the same species, and I had barely time to pen a note to be appended to the Pacific R. R. Report, which was printed during my absence; calling attention, however, to the important difference in the antennæ, which in these new specimens, had the 4th joint prolonged inwards, joints 5—11 forming a 7-leaved club. † I also indicated the differences in the prothorax, finely and sparsely punctured in the 4-leaved specimen, quite densely punctured in the two with seven leaves.

No other specimens in the mean while occurred, and I was still unwilling in my classification of Coleoptera,‡ to indicate these two forms as distinct species. The condition of the type such as to render its study very unsatisfactory, and the observations were therefore made upon the perfect individuals of the second species.

In 1870, Dr. M. Schaufuss, (Nunquam otiosus, vol. ii.) after reciting the same history I have given above, describes at length a form with 7-leaved antennal club. The name under which he makes it known is inadmissible, and it must therefore be regarded as unpub-

* Proc. Acad. Nat. Sc. Phila., 1856, 24.

† Expl. and Surveys U. S. P. R. R., 47th Parallel, insects, p. 40, pl. 1, f. 13, *a*.

‡ May, 1861, p. 128; by a typographical or clerical error the last '5 or 6' joints of the antennæ are said to be lamellated, it should be '4 or 7'.

lished. In the same paper he describes another species *P. hirticollis*, in which the antennæ are 8-leaved, but the 4th joint, which is only slightly prolonged is counted in the club. This species seems to be the second form mentioned by me, of which I figured the antenna.

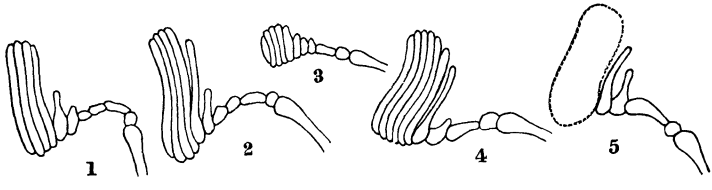
The females are much larger than the ♂, very ovate and convex, without wings, with the legs stouter and the tarsi short, only one-third as long as the tibiæ. The prolongation at the front of the head is short and broad, not emarginate, the vertical horn short, the prothorax coarsely punctured, not impressed, and finally the antennæ very much smaller, with the club rounded.

Just as this paper was being put to press, I received from Mr. Behrens a larva found deep in the earth. The description of it, by Baron Osten Sacken, will follow this note. I will merely observe, that its characters fully confirm the propriety of placing the genus as a distinct tribe, near *Trox* and *Geotrupes*, as I have done in my Classification.

The four species known to me may be divided into two groups according to the form of the antennæ, and the differences expressed in in the following table:—

1. Antennæ with joints 3—5 nearly equal, not dilated.
   6th joint scarcely wider than the 5th; 7th prolonged into a short leaf, one-fourth as long as the 8—11.....1. **fimbriata.**
   6th prolonged inwards forming a leaf one-half as long as the 7th, which is shorter than the 8—11.....2. **Behrensii.**

II. Antennæ with 3d joint elongated, 4th acutely produced inwards, 5th lamelliform, though shorter than the following ones.
   Hind angles of prothorax feebly rounded, disc clothed with long hair, elytra feebly striate.....3. **hirticollis.**
   Hind angles of prothorax strongly rounded, disc strongly retuse, elytra deeply striate.....4. **Edwardsii.**



1. **P. fimbriata.**—Blackish-brown above, chestnut beneath; prothorax much narrowed in front, hind angles feebly rounded; disc slightly impressed in front, finely, sparsely punctured, pilose only at the margin; elytra with distinct though not deep punctures and striæ; antennæ with the 6th joint not prolonged. Length 1.1 inch; 27 mm.

I have seen only the original specimen in bad condition, which has been figured in the U. S. P. R. R. Expl. and Surveys, Insects pl. 1,

f. 13. The anterior prolongation of the front is longer and narrower at base, than in the other species. The antenna is represented in fig. 1.

2. **P. Behrensii.**—Blackish-brown above, paler chestnut beneath, prothorax much narrowed in front, hind angles feebly rounded; disc rather strongly impressed in front, sparsely punctured, with a few larger punctures intermixed in the depression, and a few hairs near the tip; sides and beneath clothed with long hair as in the other species; elytra with distinct though not deep punctures and striæ; antennæ with the 6th joint prolonged. Length .85 inch; 22 mm.

♀.—Body very robust ovate, convex, strongly dilated behind; head concave, coarsely punctured, anterior prolongation short, broad, with the front margin feebly rounded; vertical horn short, broad, scarcely impressed at tip; prothorax strongly, tolerably densely punctured, with a narrow smooth dorsal line; tarsi short, one-third as long as the tibiæ, 5th joint thick, as long as the three preceding united. Length 1.20 inch; 30 mm.

California, near San Francisco; two ♂ and one ♂ kindly loaned me by Mr. Behrens. Antenna ♂ fig. 2; ♀ fig. 3.

3. **P. hirticollis.**—Blackish-brown above, chestnut beneath; prothorax much narrowed in front, hind angles feebly rounded; disc rather strongly impressed in front, tolerably densely punctured and with many long hairs proceeding from the punctures; sides and beneath with long hair; elytra rather feebly punctured and striate; antennæ with the 3d joint elongated, and 5th lamellate, a little shorter than the 6th. Length .78 inch; 20 mm.

♀.—Ovate, convex, less dilated than the other ♀ above described; frontal prolongation broad, feebly emarginate, vertical horn short emarginate; prothorax strongly and densely punctured, with a narrow smooth dorsal line; elytra feebly punctured. Length 1.42 inch; 36 mm.

Schaufuss, Nunquam otiosus, ii.

California, two ♂. The ♀ was given to me by Mr. A. Murray, and has lost all the tarsi and the antennæ. I refer it to this species with doubt; it is equally probable that it may belong to *P. fimbriata*. Antennæ ♂, fig. 4.

4. **P. Edwardsii.**—Blackish-brown, chestnut beneath; prothorax very strongly narrowed in front, with the hind angles broadly rounded, disc retuse, suddenly declivous in front and transversely impressed behind the elevation, finely not densely punctured; disc not pilose; elytra with deep punctures and striæ; antennæ with the 3d joint elongated, the 4th lamellate, one-half as long as the 5th (which is probably about one-half as long as the 6th and following). Length 1.05 inch; 26.5 mm.

One specimen with broken antennæ. It gives me great pleasure in dedicating this species to Mr. Henry Edwards, to recognize his kindness on many occasions, and his zeal in developing the Coleopterous fauna of the Pacific slope.

This species is recognizably described, though not properly named by Mr. Schaufuss (Numquam otiosus, vol. ii.). The name suggested for it by Mr. Crotch (Check List, p. 58), is likewise inadmissible, not only because he gives no reason for its adoption, and because that kind of list is an improper place for changes in nomenclature, but for the still stronger reason, that it tends to perpetuate in science the memory of the political venom which inspired the name given by Mr. Schaufuss. I cannot express myself too strongly on the necessity of keeping our scientific nomenclature free from all personal, political or religious prejudices or expressions of opinion. Such use of scientific publication, for intruding upon students of natural history irrelevant views respecting subjects, which are not comprised within the domain of their researches, must be discountenanced.

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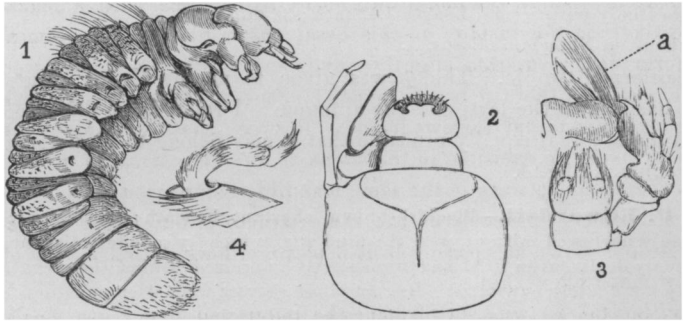
Description of the larva of PLEOCOMA, Lec.

BY BARON R. OSTEN SACKEN.

The larva, sent for examination, is fresh from a recent moult. Some parts of the head, especially the parts of the mouth, are still covered by the old skin; exuviæ of the tracheal tubes protrude on both sides from the thoracic stigmata. I mention this in advance, in order to introduce a remarkable circumstance to be mentioned below.



Larva (fig. 1) of the usual lamellicornian type, fat, soft, whitish curved, about 50 millim. long.

Head (fig. 2) rounded, yellowish-red, with the usual inverted Y-shaped impression in the middle; the occiput is longitudinally wrinkled; the front, preceding the epistoma, shows irregular transverse wrinkles; the space between front and vertex, especially on the sides of the head,